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LETTER DATED 24 JANUARY 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GEORGIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the letter dated 20 January 1997 from the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Abkhazia, Mr. Tamaz Nadareishvili, addressed to you.

May I ask your kind assistance in circulating the text of the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dr. Peter CHKHEIDZE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

97-02125 (E) 240197

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Annex

Letter dated 20 January 1997 from the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Abkhazia addressed to the Secretary-General

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you sincerely on your appointment as Secretary-General of the United Nations.

We strongly believe that your profound experience and diplomatic skills will ensure the Organization's effective service to the world community and, among other important problems, will contribute to the comprehensive settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia.

The situation in Abkhazia demands a firm approach. Unfortunately, the gross violations and crimes perpetrated by the separatists still go unpunished, for there are strong forces, particularly in the Russian Federation, which support the separatists and encourage this dangerous trend.

The Abkhaz authorities have flagrantly violated and still continue to override the rights of the Georgian population in the region. Intimidation, banditry, executions, illicit traffic of arms and narcotics, abuse and desecration of historical and cultural monuments have long been the abiding characteristic of the policy pursued by the Abkhaz leadership.

Despite the present circumstances, the Abkhaz leadership continues to appeal shamelessly to the Government of the Russian Federation as well as to various international organizations for economic aid and for the lifting of certain restrictions that in no way constitute sanctions against Abkhazia, and are imposed by the Government of Georgia to prevent the influx of illegal cargoes, mercenaries, narcotics and arms.

At a time when the negotiating process is stalled and the hundreds of thousands of refugees still have no realistic perspective of returning to their homes, the international community should strictly condemn and discourage such unjustified demands.

We are very well aware that the economy of the region is practically devastated and needs serious assistance on the part of the international community. We would welcome such efforts only after Georgia's territorial integrity has been reinstated and the Abkhaz authorities have fulfilled their obligations with respect to the return of the refugees and displaced persons.

We express strong confidence that under your guidance the United Nations and its Security Council will achieve substantive progress in the peace process leading to the comprehensive settlement of the dispute.

(Signed) Tamaz NADAREISHVILI
Chairman of the Supreme Council
of Abkhazia